(b) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the terminology "Pipeline Protection" in the context of TRIPS, if so, what is meant by the term "Pipeline Protection";

(c) whether the patent term is going to be changed; if so, whether the term is proposed to be 20 years from the date of filing, or 20 years from the date of grant;

(d) whether there is a proposal to protect biotechnology patents involving micro-organisms in India;

(e) whether new varities of plants, can be patented in the near future; and

(f) whether it is a fact that plant varieties patents will be protected by a body outside the jurisdiction of the present PATENT office?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) No decision has been taken on this matter.

(b) Yes, Sir. Article 70 of the Agreement on TRIPS deals with pipeline protection. It requires Members to provide exclusive marketing rights for a period of 5 years to pharmaceutical and agricultural chemical products in respect of which they do not make available product patent protection as on the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement. Exclusive marketing rights are to be provided subject to the conditions that such a product has obtained marketing approval in that Member or until a product patent is grantned or rejected in that Member, whichever period is shorter, provided that subsequent to the entry into force of the WTO Agreement, a patent application has been filed and a patent granted for that product in another Member and marketing approval obtained in such other Member.

(c) The TRIPS Agreement requires the term of protection to be at least 20 years. A transition period of 5 years is available to India for bringing its law into conformity with this provision.

(d) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

(e) There is no proposal to provide for patents in respect of plant varieties.

(f) Does not arise.

Export of Aluminium Metal and Semis

1786. SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the high international price of aluminium has boosted the export of indigenous aluminimum and semis;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the country is facing acute shortage of aluminium for meeting the indigenous demand;

(c) whether it is a fact that there is a demand from various quarters for the ban on the export of aluminium and its products made out of indigenous metal so as to overcome the shortage; and

(d) if so, what steps Government are taking for imposing complete ban on the export of aluminiums and semis made out of indigenous production enabling the aluminium consuming units to keep their wheel moving?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) The value of export of aluminium metal and semis during April—August, 1994 was Rs. 113 crores (Provisional). The exports during 1993-94 and 1992-93 were Rs. 255 crores and Rs. 383 crores respectively.

(b) Aluminium production in the country is not sufficient to meet the demand. The gap in the country's requirement is met through imports.

(c) and (d) Import of aluminium metal is freely allowed. Besides, Customs duty on aluminium has also been reduced to facilitate imports.

निर्यातों में वृद्धि करने के लिए लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र को सुविधाएं दिया जाना

1787. **श्री इकबाल सिंह :** क्या वाणिज्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार देश के निर्यातों में वृद्धि करने के लिए लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र को और सुविधाएं देने का विचार रखती है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है ;

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो उसके क्या कारण हैं ;

(घ) क्या सरकार ने गत तीन वर्षों के दौरान लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र द्वारा निर्यातों में वृद्धि करने के मामले में दिए गए योगदान की प्रतिशतता का कोई मूल्यांकन किया है; और

(ङ) यदि हां, तो सरकार द्वारा लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र को संरक्षण देने और उसकी दशा में सुधार करने के लिए क्या कारगर कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं ?

वाणिज्य मंत्री (श्री प्रणव मुखर्जी): (क), (ख) और (ङ) संशोधित निर्यात आयात नीति 1992-97 में लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र से निर्यात किए जाने पर विशेष बल दिया गया है । निर्यात घराने/व्यापार घराने/चोटी के व्यापार घराने/सर्वोच्च चोटी के व्यापार घरानों का दर्जा देने के लिए लघु उद्योग, हथकरघा

एवं हस्तशिल्प क्षेत्रों के उत्पादों के निर्यात को दुगुना लाभ दिया जाता है यदि दर्जे का दावा एफओबी निर्यात मूल्य के हिसाब से किया जाता है। यदि दर्जे का दावा अर्जित निवल विदेशी मुद्रा (एन-एफई) के आधार पर किया जाता है तो, लघु उद्योग द्वारा निर्मित उत्पादों के निर्यात के लिए दुगुना लाभ तथा हथकरघा एवं हस्तशिल्प क्षेत्र द्वारा निर्मित हाथ से बुने गलीचों तथा रेशम के गलीचों के निर्यात से अर्जित निवल विदेशी मुद्रा के लिए तीगुना लाभ दिया जाता है। शुल्क-छूट योजना के तहत, लघु उद्योग इकाइयों को, जहा लागू हो, सामान्य जरूरत के 50% पर बैंक गारन्टी को सुविधा प्रदान की गई है। इसके अलावा. लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र में निर्यात को बढ़ाने के लिए विदेशों में अंतर्राष्ट्रीय प्रदर्शनियों में लघु क्षेत्र इकाइयों की भागीदारी प्रशिक्षण कार्यक्रम, निर्यात प्रबंध एवं विपणन कार्यक्रम आयोजीत किए जाते हैं।

(ग) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

(घ) वर्ष 1990-91, 1991-92 तथा 1992-93 में पिछले तीन वर्षों के दौरान जिनके आंकड़े उपलब्ध है, हुए कुल निर्यात मे लघु उद्योग क्षेत्र का निर्यात का हिस्सा क्रमश: 29.7%, 31.5% तथा 33.1% होने का अनुमान है।

Import Contents of Exports

1788. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import contents of the country's exports have declined;

(b) if so, the details thereof?

(c) what are the details of the exported items having major import contents; and

(d) the steps taken to reduce import contents of India's exports?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The import intensity varies from commodity to commodity. While it is high in the case of exports of Gem and Jewellery, the import intensity is marginal or low in the case of exports of primary products like agricultural products and mineral products.

(d) The EXIM policy 1992—97, inter alia, to promote efficient and internationally competitive import substitution and self-reliance under a deregulated framework for foreign trade. It also seeks to foster the country's Research and Development (R&D) and technological capabilities. Under the policy, 'Deemed Exports' have been defined as transactions in which the goods supplied do not leave the country but earn scarce foreign exchange for the country. Benefits such as duty exemption schemes, duty drawback schemes and refund of termial excise duty have been extended to deemed exports. Besides, the Government have also launched, in association with trade and industry, a major nation-wide compaign on quality and to take other steps to bring Indian products to world standards.

Improvement in India's Trade Deficit

1789. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been some improvement in India's trade deficit recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the factors responsible for bringing favourable changes in India's trade deficit; and

(d) how Government propose to keep imports under check?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Estimates of trade deficit for the recent 3 years as per DGCI&S trade statistics are:

	Rs. crores	US $ Million
1991-92 . .	3809	1546
1992-93 . . .	9687	3345
1993-94 . . .	3350	1068

The trade deficit in 1991-92 was lower than that in 1992-93 but higher than that during 1993-94. Lower trade deficit in 1991-92 was due to import compression having been resorted to due to balance of payments crisis.

(c) Increase in level of exports is the main factor for favourable change in trade deficit in 1993-94.

(d) The Export-Import Policy, 1992—97 aims at encouraging efficient and internationally competitive import-substitution within the liberalised framwork of foreign trade, and in line with the Eight Plan Projections.

Agreement between India and Vietnam

1790. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Vietnam have recently signed an agree-